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14. ABSTRACT Recently, the US Navy proposed a scaled-down version of the sea base -- the Global Fleet Station (GFS). The GFS' size eliminates many of the technical and fiscal challenges that limit the viability of the Seabasing Joint Integrating Concept. Its smaller size also makes it far more relevant to the new set of security-shaping missions now gaining prominence in national security and foreign policy strategies. By their nature, these security-shaping missions target populations in remote or less-developed regions of the world, which makes access, support, and sustainment of these missions a challenge. While the GFS concept can solve or simplify some of these challenges, the US Navy lacks the assets necessary to support a robust security-shaping strategy that also benefits the world community. In view of this limitation, the US Navy published a vision for future international maritime operations called the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative (GMPI). Through the use of these two concepts, GMPI and GFS, the Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) can simplify many of the access, support and sustainment problems normally present when deploying limited forces on international security-shaping missions.					
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**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.**

**REFINING SEABASING TO SUPPORT
SECURITY-SHAPING MISSIONS**

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Abstract

Recently, the US Navy proposed a scaled-down version of the sea base -- the Global Fleet Station (GFS). The GFS' size eliminates many of the technical and fiscal challenges that limit the viability of the Seabasing Joint Integrating Concept. Its smaller size also makes it far more relevant to the new set of security-shaping missions now gaining prominence in national security and foreign policy strategies. By their nature, these security-shaping missions target populations in remote or less-developed regions of the world, which makes access, support, and sustainment of these missions a challenge. While the GFS concept can solve or simplify some of these challenges, the US Navy lacks the assets necessary to support a robust security-shaping strategy that also benefits the world community. In view of this limitation, the US Navy published a vision for future international maritime operations called the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative (GMPI). Through the use of these two concepts, GMPI and GFS, the Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) can simplify many of the access, support and sustainment problems normally present when deploying limited forces on international security-shaping missions.

Introduction

The idea of a sea base,¹ a forward maritime operating area to support naval, air, and ground operations, is not new. Its roots can be traced back to March 1776 when US Marines conducted their first amphibious raid against the Bahamas from Continental Navy ships.² Today, the ideas proposed in the Seabasing Joint Integrating Concept (JIC) resemble the massive amphibious fleets of World War II more than they do this early beginning.

One limitation of the Seabasing JIC, as written, is its heavy focus on major combat operations (MCO) and its limited reference to the full range of military operations (ROMO). In addition, development costs, unproven technology, and potential political repercussions raise questions about the feasibility of the Seabasing JIC.

Recently, the US Navy has proposed a scaled-down version of the sea base – the Global Fleet Station (GFS). The GFS’ size eliminates many of the technical and fiscal challenges that limit the viability of the Seabasing JIC. Its smaller size also makes it far more relevant to the new set of security-shaping missions³ now gaining prominence in national security and foreign policy strategies. By their nature, these security-shaping missions target populations in remote or less-developed regions of the world, which makes access, support, and sustainment of these missions a challenge. While the GFS concept can solve or simplify some of these challenges, the US Navy lacks the assets necessary to support a robust security-shaping strategy that also benefits the world community. In view of this limitation, the US Navy published a vision for future international maritime operations called

1. The Seabasing Joint Integrating Concept (JIC) defines Seabasing as the concept itself and a sea base as the actual physical platform.

2. GlobalSecurity.org, “Marine Corps History,” <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/usmc/history.htm> (accessed 18 April 2007).

3. For this paper, security-shaping missions is a collective term encompassing missions associated with Phase 0 Shaping activities like Maritime Security Operations, Security Cooperation Activities, and Civil-Military Operations.

the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative (GMPI). Through the use of these two concepts, GMPI and GFS, the Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) can simplify many of the access, support and sustainment problems normally present when deploying limited forces on international security-shaping missions.

Seabasing JIC Capabilities and Limitations

In the 1990s, US Marine Corps planners resurrected the Seabasing concept to support their vision of future maneuver warfare called ship-to-objective movement (STOM). The Marine planners presented the idea to the Navy hoping to gain a commitment to build and operate new platforms capable of supporting STOM. The Navy, however, quickly realized that the Marines' concept also provided a justification for the continued construction and development of large capital ships.⁴ Embodied in the Seabasing JIC, the Marines' concept has been expanded to focus on networked ships supporting joint forces in MCO, Counterinsurgency, and Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Response operations.⁵ The concept envisions the rapid deployment, assembly, command, projection, reconstitution, and re-employment of joint combat power from the sea, thereby eliminating the need for land bases within the Joint Operations Area (JOA).⁶ The Seabasing JIC contains six measures of performance:

- Deploy and arrive in the JOA within 10-14 days of an execution order.
- Assemble, integrate and support MCO within 24-72 hours of arriving in the JOA.
- Employ at least one brigade for Joint Forcible Entry Operations during an 8-10 hour period of darkness.

4. Henry J. Hendrix, "Exploit Sea Basing," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 129, no. 8 (August 2003): 61.

5. U.S. Department of Defense, *Seabasing Joint Integrating Concept Version 1.0* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, August 2005), 4.

6. Ibid., 53.

- Sustain at least two (2) joint brigades operating ashore for an indefinite period, drawing support from the continental US or from secure advanced bases located up to 2000 nm away, including selected maintenance and level III medical care.
- Reconstitute one brigade for reemployment within 10-14 days of an execution order.⁷
- Support and sustain assigned forces 24 hours a day in all weather up to sea state 4.⁸

The Seabasing JIC provides a roadmap and vision for an impressive deployment and support capability. In doing so, however, it leaves many technical questions to be solved and many fiscal and political problems to be answered.

From a technical standpoint, the concept needs to be validated by the ability to move combat forces to their objective and to sustain them once there. The ideas proposed to achieve this movement have spawned a myriad of concept aircraft, vessels, and flight decks to connect the sea bases and to handle the numerous support issues such as lighterage, troop berthing, marshalling, ammunition and cargo storage, and headquarters capability. These platforms are also susceptible to bad weather and have yet to demonstrate the ability to operate in sea state 4. While the enemy's ability to find, target, and successfully attack the sea base is complicated by its offshore position and mobility, the sea base is still vulnerable to many forms of surface, subsurface, and air attack.⁹ In addition, the planned sea base platforms will only be able to lift 3.9 Marine expeditionary brigade equivalents, down from the 4.9 brigades that the current transport force can handle today.¹⁰

7. Defense, *Seabasing Joint Integrating Concept*, 8.

8. Ibid., 37.

9. John P. Patch, "Sea Basing Chasing the Dream," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 131, no. 5 (May 2005): 39-40.

10. Robert O. Work, "On Sea Basing," in *Reposturing the Force: U.S. Overseas Presence in the Twenty-first Century*, Newport Papers no. 26, ed. Carnes Lord (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2006): 126.

The fiscal problems are also numerous. Today a single Maritime Prepositioning Force (Future) ship (MPF(F)) is projected to cost \$1.5 billion and displace more than a *Nimitz*-class carrier.¹¹ The cost of the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) has jumped from \$220 million to \$411 million. The price for a single, as yet unbuilt, *Zumwalt*-class destroyer (DDG-1000) ranges from \$2.5 to \$4.7 billion, with at least five such ships projected. The *Ticonderoga*-class cruiser replacement, CG(X), will cost approximately \$3.2 billion. Added to this is the six-year plan to construct three Mobile Landing Platforms (MLP), three Dry Cargo/Ammunition ships (T-AKE), an Amphibious Assault ship (LHA-6), three Large, Medium-speed, Roll-on/Roll-off (LMSR) ships, three Joint High Speed Vessels (JHSV), a Joint Command Ship (JCC(X)), two nuclear carriers, and eight *Virginia*-class submarines. It almost goes without saying that the Navy's \$16 billion annual ship-building budget is strained just to support the 12 ships per year construction rate needed to maintain the 313-ship Navy, much less fund a robust Seabasing capability.¹²

Finally, the Seabasing JIC has inherent political problems. US military operations have always been exposed to risk of failure or complication when foreign countries refused access to their airspace, bases, airports, and seaports. The Seabasing JIC is an attempt to mitigate this risk in a future world where the availability of forward operating bases to US forces is uncertain. While solving this access problem, the Seabasing JIC makes other nations nervous because it also mitigates their ability to influence future US operations and US use of force. Chilean Admiral Rodolfo Codin Diaz recently wrote, "Sea basing is a great idea that provides options, but it should be implemented taking due care of the effects it may generate in friendly nations. The management of this concept, as it is, can make the United

11. Patch, "Chasing the Dream," 39.

12. Norman Polmar, "Ships in Shoal Waters," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 133, no. 4 (April 2007): 86-87.

States appear to tend toward isolation and as not needing help, which is in contradiction with the concept of cooperation.”¹³ This opinion was echoed by a majority of US allies.

Clearly, the Seabasing JIC has some real promise and some real problems. By focusing primarily on MCO, Seabasing attempts to establish a future vision for developing and procuring new naval weapons systems. In doing so, Navy planners have largely ignored the Seabasing JIC’s applicability to ROMO, particularly the security-shaping missions. Lost is a critical aspect from the original sea basing debate—“Sea Basing is not about platforms, nor is it limited to logistics. Sea Basing is about access, maneuver, operational tempo, and initiative. The ability to shape and support military and interagency operations from a relatively secure and unobtrusive base offers unparalleled potential to the Joint Force Commander (JFC) throughout ROMO.”¹⁴

By introducing the GFS concept, Navy planners provided a timely refocus of the Seabasing JIC into an area of immediate relevance. Appearing under the heading Sea Basing in the 2006 Naval Operations Concept (NOC), the GFS is described as “... a persistent sea base of operations from which to coordinate and employ adaptive force packages within a regional area of interest. Focusing primarily on Phase 0 (shaping) operations, Theater Security Cooperation, Global Maritime Awareness, and tasks associated specifically with the War on Terror, GFS offers a means to increase regional maritime security through the cooperative efforts of joint, inter-agency, and multinational partners, as well as Non-Governmental Organizations.”¹⁵ In addition, many of the technical, fiscal, and political

13. Gary T. Blore, “The Commanders Respond,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 134, no. 3 (March 2007): 17.

14. Art Corbett and Vince Goulding, “Sea Basing: What’s New?,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 128, no. 11 (November 2002): 37.

15. U.S. Department of the Navy, *Naval Operations Concept 2006*, (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of the Navy, 2006), 30.

problems briefly touched on above are resolved when the Seabasing JIC is scaled down to a single-ship GFS.

From a technical standpoint, the security-shaping mission implies a permissive or low-threat environment, thus a GFS does not need to protect itself from the same magnitude of threat as that posed by MCO. US Navy ships routinely operate for months away from naval bases and seaports using underway replenishment ships to support their logistics needs. Most of these ships routinely embark helicopters and are also equipped with small boats, thus the GFS avoids the support and connector problems inherent in the Seabasing JIC. The GFS would generally only support limited parties ashore and would therefore not require 24-hour operations. When bad weather is forecast, the GFS would reload its forces if necessary, leave to avoid the conditions, and return once they have passed.

Fiscally, naval ships are expensive to crew and operate. Average annual operating costs for the most likely GFS platforms range from \$26.3 million for an *Oliver Hazard Perry*-class frigate to \$49.5 million for an *Austin*-class amphibious transport dock ship.¹⁶ When compared with the cost of deriving support from the local economy and forging a logistics tail from the airports, roads, and rail networks of the host nation, the GFS' cost can appear exorbitant. This cost, however, is offset somewhat by the fact that potential GFS platforms are already built and operating. Their annual budgets are sunk costs that would be spent on deployments regardless. Therefore, the real cost of operating the GFS is an opportunity cost associated with a ship being unavailable for other missions because it has been assigned to GFS duties. In addition, commercial support via sea, land, and air can also be expensive. Commercial shipping companies are often used when US Transportation

16. Visibility and Management of Operating and Support Costs, spreadsheet provided by site operator, <http://www.navyvamosc.com>, 01 May 2007.

Command cannot support deployed forces. The shipping costs involved in moving even small amounts of freight are significant. For example, DHL charges an estimated \$6,421 to ship a 100 lb, standard tri-wall (48"x40"x36") container to Lagos, Nigeria, from the US. The same tri-wall container would cost an estimated \$4,978 to ship to the South Pacific from the US. The time involved is also significant, particularly when the need may be critical and “overnight shipping” to most parts of the world does not exist.¹⁷ Also, the costs cited are only to major cities and do not include the costs for transportation to remote locations, the potential for delay, or the impact of criminal activity.

Politically, by its very nature, the GFS conducting security-shaping missions is attempting to engage countries and solve many of the potential political problems inherent in the Seabasing JIC. One could argue that operations from a sea base could isolate the forces involved from the very population they are trying to engage, since the forces would not have to stay ashore and the sea base could be completely supported with supplies purchased outside the region. In fact, it would be a mistake to operate exclusively from the sea. As a recent *US Naval Institute Proceedings* article pointed out, “... the full strategic advantage of Sea Basing can be realized only by maintaining diverse basing options, such as ports, airfields, and land bases. This does not diminish the need for Sea Basing, but it recognizes the need for foreign bases or territory to stage U.S. forces, provide logistical support, and give coalition members an opportunity to participate in U.S.-led campaigns.”¹⁸ As a result, careful management by the JFC is critical in order to balance both the forces ashore and the sea base’s impact on the local economy. Overall, the GFS solves many more problems than it creates; however, the real power of the sea base is to resolve the challenge of access.

17. DHL, “Get rates,” <http://www.dhl-usa.com/ratecalculator/HandlerServlet> (accessed 04 May 2007).

18. John J. Klein and Rich Morales, “Sea Basing Isn’t Just About the Sea,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 130, no. 1 (January 2004): 35.

The Challenge of Access

The past decades have seen the emphasis of the National Security Strategies shift away from defense towards security. This shift represents a growing recognition that the threat to the US has moved away from a purely military one and more towards a dispersed global insurgency caused by bad governance, failed states, and disregard for basic human rights.¹⁹ The 2006 NOC highlighted that “The challenge for the Navy and Marine Corps today is to remain capable of traditional naval missions while simultaneously enhancing our ability to conduct non-traditional missions in order to ensure that naval power and influence can be applied at and from the sea, across the littorals, and ashore, as required.”²⁰ Three of the naval missions detailed within the 2006 NOC were Maritime Security Operations, Security Cooperation, and Civil-Military Operations. These security-shaping missions emphasize coordination and cooperation with the inter-agency and host nation governments to promote regional stability and enhanced security of the ocean. Security-shaping missions are generally envisioned for South American and the “arc of instability,” a region running from Africa, through the Middle East, ending in Southeast Asia. This arc lies within the Pacific Command (PACOM) and the proposed Africa Command (AFRICOM) areas of responsibility. Thus, the challenge of access to these regions is one of remote location, immature infrastructure, lack of forward operating bases, and the political restrictions of host nations.

A quick look at the map reveals that planning and supporting security-shaping missions are complicated by the many remote and dispersed island and archipelagic nations, the rough terrain of jungles and deserts, and the lack of mature infrastructure. Worldwide,

19. David J. Kilcullen, “Countering Global Insurgency,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 24, no. 4 (August 2005): 606.

20. Navy, *Operations Concept*, 11.

2.2 billion people live within 100 km of a coastline.²¹ The PACOM region alone encompasses nearly 60% of the world's population living in 43 countries and 20 territories and possessions.²² Water dominates the geography with over a dozen gulfs, seas and oceans.²³ Many of the nations are spread over vast island chains. Indonesia alone has more than 17,500 islands, of which more than 6000 are inhabited.²⁴ Porous borders, large water expanses, and dense jungles make monitoring activities and enforcing laws within a state's borders next to impossible. The future AFRICOM, though less dominated by water, offers rough terrain while lacking internal infrastructure such as roads, railways, and airports.

Compared with the US, the top five Gulf of Guinea nations, as determined by per capita Gross Domestic Product and normalized by country area, possess less than 15% of US road capacity, 13% of US rail capacity, and 6% of the number of useable airports.²⁵

Another aspect of the access challenge is the lack of forward bases from which to support the missions. Historically, states have acquired forward operating bases by conquest or colonization, by providing guarantees of security or protection for the host state, or by paying “rents” in the form of security assistance, arms transfers, or subsidies (e.g., the host state gains the protection of ballistic missile defenses by agreeing to house ballistic missile defense forces). Conquest and colonization are no longer viable options, forcing the U.S. to

21. John G. Morgan Jr. and Charles W. Martoglio, “The 1,000-Ship Navy Global Maritime Network,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 131, no. 11 (November 2005): 15.

22. U.S. Pacific Command, “PACOM Facts,” <http://www.pacom.mil/about/pacom.shtml> (accessed 04 May 2007).

23. Central Intelligence Agency, “The World Factbook – Pacific Ocean,” <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/zn.html> (accessed 04 May 2007).

24. Central Intelligence Agency, “The World Factbook – Indonesia,” <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/id.html> (accessed 04 May 2007).

25. Central Intelligence Agency, “The World Factbook – (Angola, Gabon, Ghana, Nambia, Nigeria, United States of America),” <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html> (accessed 27 April 2007).

rely on incentives to gain access.²⁶ Diplomacy is increasingly complicated by a return to a multi-polar economic power structure forming around China, Russia, the EU, Japan, India and the U.S.²⁷

Another form of access challenge for security-shaping missions is host nation political restrictions within a region. Governments may desire cooperation, but are restricted by population sensitivities or allied opinions.²⁸ For example, Indonesia restricted the access of US forces ashore during the 2004 tsunami because of Muslim population sensitivities. Governments may also fail to act because of coercion, where an adversary threatens an ally to prevent cooperation with the US (e.g., North Korean ballistic missile threats against Japan).²⁹ Finally, force protection concerns and the resulting reluctance of the US population to place forces in harm's way represent yet another type of access challenge for security-shaping missions.

Solving the Access Challenge

Security-shaping missions are critical to dealing with regional problems before they become a concern to national security. The location of many of these regional problems makes access a challenge. In many cases, access via the sea is the quickest effective solution. As a subset of Seabasing, the GFS is custom-made to meet this requirement. According to the 2006 NOC, a GFS has the following characteristics:

- Scalable composition based on GCC requirements, the operating environment, and the mission.

26. Robert E. Harkavy, "Thinking About Basing," in *Reposturing the Force: U.S. Overseas Presence in the Twenty-first Century*, Newport Papers no. 26, ed. Carnes Lord (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2006): 22.

27. Ibid., 23.

28. Lincoln P. Bloomfield Jr., "Politics and Diplomacy of the Global Defense Posture Review," in *Reposturing the Force: U.S. Overseas Presence in the Twenty-first Century*, Newport Papers no. 26, ed. Carnes Lord (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2006): 61.

29. Harkavy, "Thinking About Basing," 16.

- Provides operational maneuver and assured access to joint forces.
- Reduces footprint ashore minimizing the need for host nation permissions to operate.
- Represents a safe, sustainable logistics tail at sea.
- Serves as a persistent sea base of operations from which to coordinate and employ adaptive force packages within a regional area of interest.
- Increases regional maritime security through the cooperative efforts of joint, inter-agency, and multinational partners, as well as Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGO) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO).
- Serves as a self-contained headquarters for regional operations with the capacity to repair and service all ships, small craft, and aircraft assigned.
- Provides classroom space, limited medical facilities, an information fusion center, and some combat service support capability.
- Complements more traditional Carrier Strike Group / Expeditionary Strike Group training and deployment cycles.³⁰

In addition, the GFS has several more advantages when used for security-shaping missions.

First, GFS assets already exist within the National Fleet. No additional large-scale design or procurement is required. The normal design and procurement activities necessary to maintain the National Fleet for defense purposes would also provide assets to support future GFS missions. Existing GFS assets also come with a variety of embarked small boats, landing craft, helicopters of various sizes, and even unmanned vehicles that greatly expand the GFS' capabilities.

30. Navy, *Operations Concept*, 30-31.

Second, the GFS can scale its level of covertness. If a force's presence is a problem for the local population, the GFS can sit many miles offshore, moving in briefly to resupply before returning to international waters. A covert GFS could also benefit host nations conducting missions like Counterinsurgency or Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance. For the most part, however, security-shaping missions would benefit from tangible evidence of US presence and support provided by a visible GFS anchored in the local harbor or just offshore.

Third, a water-borne, mobile GFS brings its own infrastructure and can take advantage of coastal and island geography to gain access to devastated or immature theaters that would be more difficult if not impossible for land and air forces. A GFS would also be the only platform capable of supporting missions that can only be performed on the water, including fisheries enforcement, piracy patrols, ocean environmental cleanup, and Maritime Domain Awareness. Several GFS spread across a region would essentially be forward-deployed and able to rapidly reconstitute, concentrate, and redeploy their forces in response to a crisis.

Fourth, a GFS can move forces engaged in security-shaping missions to remote areas of operations and sustain them without access to nearby land bases. A GFS could also allow security-shaping forces to conduct several missions of various sizes simultaneously across a region. Considering a notional plan of intended movement of 15 knots, a GFS could spend 12 hours supporting group A. It could then transit 12 hours through the night to support group B 180 nm to the north. Following 12 hours with group B, the GFS could then spend 12 hours transiting 180 nm north to support group C in the same manner. After leaving group C, the GFS could transit an additional 12 hours/180 nm north to rendezvous with a

supply ship for a 12-hour replenishing window, before transiting 36 hours and 540 nm south to support Group A again. This cycle could be repeated every five days if necessary or extended if longer transit distances were required. During each 12-hour group support window, the GFS could resupply the forces ashore via small boat or helicopter. In the case of time critical parts or supplies, the part could be loaded on a longer-range transport aircraft, a C-17 for instance, and airdropped next to the GFS for recovery and further transport if required. In this manner, a GFS could sustain forces living with the local populations, giving them time to develop trust in US support, to understand the ideals of the National Security Strategy, and to develop a network of relationships to facilitate mutual problem-solving in the future.

Fifth, a mobile GFS, surrounded by water, operating in a permissive or low-threat environment, adds a robust level of force protection. Crossing the water immediately complicates a terrorist attack against the GFS itself. The GFS can be discretely armed without drawing the attention of the host nation population. Security-shaping forces have a safe place to return until the situation ashore is stabilized enough for them to remain. Security-shaping forces would have a secure storage area onboard the GFS for expensive or sensitive equipment or stores like radios, weapons, or ammunition. Instead of basing ashore with everything they need, security-shaping forces could resupply with smaller amounts more frequently. The secure storage onboard the GFS would also provide security-shaping forces with access to low-demand gear they might not normally have, such as well drilling rigs, small tractors, or lifts. These items could be lifted ashore by embarked helicopters and returned when no longer needed.

Recent operations in the Gulf of Guinea highlight the GFS capabilities. During March 2006, the USS *Emory S. Land*, a submarine tender, got underway for 88 days to support a European Command Theater Security Cooperation engagement mission to the Gulf of Guinea. The *Land* carried Marines; Seabees; a Fleet Hydrographic survey team; staff from the Navy Criminal Investigating Service and the Defense Intelligence Agency; and instructors on leadership, hazardous material handling, storage and disposal, and maritime law. On the way south, the *Land* dropped a contingent of Sailors on the island nation of Sao Tome to base out of tents for a month while they repaired a high school and several patrol boats. Each of the six Gulf of Guinea nations *Land* visited was presented with a menu of training options from which to select, including medical training, damage control, small boat maintenance and repair, naval operations, and small arms and tactics. During the mission, *Land* conducted four underway replenishments, transferring one million gallons of fuel and 250 pallets of cargo. The *Land* was the fourth ship to carry out this mission. Previously, the US Coast Guard Cutter *Bear* (WMEC-901), USS *Gunston Hall* (LSD-44), and USS *Carr* (FFG-52) had served as the Gulf of Guinea GFS.³¹

The Global Maritime Partnership Initiative Force Multiplier

While the GFS is the ready-made solution for the challenge of access, it still suffers from a predominantly US military face and world suspicion of US foreign policy motives. It also suffers from the limited number of US assets that can be supplied for the mission. Another recent concept, GMPI, could significantly mitigate both of these problems by increasing the number of assets available for GFS duty and by providing international legitimacy for the security-shaping mission.

31. Mike Budney, "Mission Improbable A U.S. Navy Charm Offensive in West Africa," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 132, no. 7 (July 2006): 33-35.

Originally called the 1,000-Ship Navy, GMPI is rooted in the idea that each nation faces a series of common threats. Among them are piracy, smuggling, drug trading, illegal immigration, banditry, human smuggling and slavery, environmental attack, trade disruption, weapons proliferation, political and religious extremism, and terrorism. No single nation has the ships, resources, or venues to deal with them all.³² The GMPI proposes that national and international navies and private industries cooperate to form a “... network that vastly increases the number of sensors available to monitor security in the maritime domain while increasing the number of responders capable of ensuring maritime security.”³³

The GMPI sets two goals:

- Increase maritime domain awareness (the knowledge of anything at sea that affects a nation’s security, safety, economics, or its environment).
- Posture assets to rapidly respond to crisis or emergencies that occur at sea or in littorals.³⁴

At its core, GMPI is all about security and presence and is thus a natural partner to the GFS. Adding a GMPI flavor to the Seabasing JIC produces several more advantages.

First, the pool of assets capable of supporting a GFS mission dramatically increases once the ships from cooperating international navies, coast guards, and private industry are included. In addition, the types and capabilities of these ships fill gaps in the US National Fleet capabilities and reduce the burden on the US Navy and Coast Guard. Recently, the Australian Navy provisioned 22 patrol boats along with maritime advisors to help 12 Pacific island nations address their security issues.³⁵ Chile has begun construction of an Offshore

32. Morgan Jr. and Martoglio, “1,000-Ship Navy,” 15.

33. Ibid., 15.

34. Ibid., 16.

35. “The Commanders Respond,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 132, no. 3 (March 2006): 34.

Patrol Vessel.³⁶ The Dutch have developed the *Absalon*-class combat support ship that can carry a 70-man medical staff and act as a floating hospital, in addition to more traditional maritime roles.³⁷ In addition, at least 24 countries currently operate or have plans to develop large amphibious ships similar to the US landing dock ships, an almost perfect hull class for the GFS mission.³⁸ More ships to draw on for GFS missions means more stations, manned more often, in more places worldwide.

Second, the GMPI gives the GFS a multi-national, non-US-military face, perhaps the most important factor given the political nature of most of these missions. There is a growing acceptance among our allies that security is everyone's problem. As stated by Finnish Navy Commander-in-Chief, Vice Admiral Homstr, "... when considering the new tasks of navies formed through surveys conducted by different maritime countries, one can clearly see that lower level tasks than war, such as crisis prevention and management, have risen to a level even with the traditional tasks of warfare."³⁹ This type of understanding and cooperation adds levels of legitimacy to the security-shaping mission since it is no longer a unilateral US effort. It eases the burden on the US taxpayer and makes it easier for IGOs and NGOs, whose politics and funding streams demand neutrality, to make use of the capabilities provided by a GFS. Not only are NGOs and IGOs generally more capable of performing regional shaping, they are also the preferred organization to handle such tasks.

Third, GMPI assets conducting real world GFS missions would provide an impetus for international militaries, IGOs and NGOs to standardize their tactics, techniques and

36. "The Commanders Respond," 36.

37. "The Commanders Respond," 37.

38. Stephen Saunders, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 2006-2007* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 17, 29, 73, 115, 182, 249, 297, 331, 346, 389, 415, 450, 479, 499, 507, 524, 531, 601, 645, 691, 713, 754, 796, 841.

39. Blore, "The Commanders Respond," 18.

procedures. The ability to pool capacity, share information and best practices, and refine coordination in a non-crisis atmosphere can only improve the security-shaping mission and crisis-response capability. For instance, a GFS could provide the support for regular, international Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Response exercises in the very environments from which sea-based support for this type of operation would most likely be required.

Conclusion

The GFS and GMPI are two tools for the GCC's security-shaping tool bag. A GCC staff analyzes a security-shaping mission to determine if GFS support is warranted and the characteristics required of it, i.e., size and number of helicopters, small boats, and landing craft. These requirements are forwarded to the Joint Chiefs for staffing with the Department of State and US allies to assign assets from the GMPI to GFS duty. Using existing assets, the GFS brings immediate relevance to the Seabasing JIC by refocusing it to address ROMO, in addition to MCO, and by removing many of the technical, fiscal, and political problems. The Seabasing JIC in turn, solves or simplifies the challenges of access by bringing its own infrastructure, taking advantage of coastal and island geography to gain access to immature theaters, and providing a robust level of force protection. GMPI increases the number of assets available for GFS while giving it a multi-national, non-US-military face. The end result is more effective leverage of limited forces on internationally supported security-shaping missions designed to increase world stability and US national security.

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